

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 W
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O R 081140Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9069

INFO USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OEXC, BU (STOITCHKOV, NIKIFOR)

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL VISITOR: SPECIAL REQUEST

FOR CU/IVP AND CU/EE (INFO: EUR/EE)

REF: A) SOFIA 2137; B) SOFIA 1907; C) SOFIA 35

1. MINISTER OF TRANSPORT HAS REQUESTED THAT AT NO EXPENSE TO USG A TECHNICAL EXPERT ACCOMPANY FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER STOITCHKOV ON HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE US.
2. EXPERT WOULD BE VASSILEV NEDYALKO VRADZHALIEV, CHIEF OF PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION IN MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT. PERMISSION FOR HIM TO ACCOMPANY STOITCHKOV IS NOT A CONDITION FOR STOITCHKOV'S VISIT TO WHICH HE LOOKS FORWARD VERY MUCH; BUT STOITCHKOV EXPLAINED TO AMBASSADOR EVENING JANUARY 7 THAT HE SINCERELY BELIEVES HE WOULD DERIVE GREATER ADVANTAGE FROM HIS VISIT IF HE WERE ACCOMPANIED BY VRADZHALIEV.
3. SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WHILE STOITCHKOV IS INTERESTED IN BOTH PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION AND FREIGHT, VRADZHALIEV IS RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION. TO THE EXTENT THAT FIRST (OR SECOND) PART OF STOITCHKOV'S SCHEDULE COULD EMPHASIZE THE PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION ASPECTS, VRADZHALIEV'S VISIT TO THE US COULD BE ABBREVIATED.

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4. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT GIVE A "NIHIL

OBSTAT" TO THE PROPOSAL THAT VRADZHALIEV COME ALONG. THIS WOULD BE ON UNDERSTANDING THAT (A) TRAVEL AND ALL OTHER EXPENSES FOR VRAZHALIEV WOULD BE BORNE BY GOB; (B) ANY PROGRAMMING DIFFERING FROM PROGRAMMING OF STOITCHKOV VISIT WOULD HAVE TO BE ARRANGED BY BULGARIAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON.

5. REASONS FOR ABOVE RECOMMENDATION ARE:

A. AS STOITCHKOV'S BIODATA (REFTEL B) SHOWS, HE HAS LONG EXPERIENCE IN PARTY. WHILE HE IS AN EXPERIENCED ADMINISTRATOR AND DECISION-MAKER, HIS POSITION IN MINISTRY THUS APPEARS TO BE MORE POLITICAL THAN PROFESSIONAL. VRADZHALIEV'S PRESENCE WOULD PROVIDE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE NEEDED FOR GOB TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM VISIT FROM STOITCHKOV'S VISIT.

B. IT WOULD ALSO GIVE HIM MORE CONFIDENCE. CONVERSELY, HE WOULD WORRY ABOUT HIS PROGRAM, A RELATIVELY NOVELTY FOR BULGARIAN LEADERS, IF WE REFUSED TO HAVE HIM ACCOMPANIED BY SOMEONE WHOSE TECHNICAL JUDGMENT HE TRUSTS.

C. WHILE COMMERCIAL PROMOTION IS NOT PURPOSE OF IV PROGRAM, WE BELIEVE VRADZHALIEV'S PARTICIPATION IN STOITCHKOV'S PROGRAM COULD ALSO FACILITATE EVENTUAL GOB EQUIPMENT PURCHASES AND OTHER COMMERCIAL LINKS. WE SEE NO CONFLICT BETWEEN THIS TECHNICIAN ACCOMPANYING AN INTERNATIONAL VISITOR AND CONCENTRATING OUR ATTENTION ON OUR OWN OBJECTIVES IN CONNECTION WITH STOITCHKOV VISIT.

6. PLEASE REPLY BY IMMEDIATE MESSAGE.
HERZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SOFIA00040
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750007-0509
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750169/aaaacine.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 SOFIA 2137, 75 SOFIA 1907, 75 SOFIA 35
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <05 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERNATIONAL VISITOR: SPECIAL REQUEST FOR CU/IVP AND CU/EE (INFO: EUR/EE)
TAGS: OEXC, BU, (STOITCHKOV, NIKIFOR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006